

Appln. No. 10/655,175

Attorney Docket No. 10541-1841

II. Remarks

Reconsideration and re-examination of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is herein respectfully requested.

After entering this amendment, claims 1-20 remain pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

The undersigned acknowledges the examiner's indication of the allowance of claims 5 – 9 and 14 – 20.

The undersigned also acknowledges the examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 10 – 13 if rewritten into independent form so as to include all of the limitations of any base and intervening claims. Claim 10 has accordingly been rewritten into independent form and now recites all of the limitations previously recited in its base claim. Allowance of claims 10 – 13 is respectfully requested.

Since claim 10 previously depended from claim 1, and therefore inherently included all of the limitations of that claim, this amendment of claim 10 is properly considered a non-narrowing amendment.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,296,277, to Bittinger et al. ("Bittinger"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

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Claim 1 of the present application has been amended to include a limitation previously presented in claim 10 and now recites that the bracket includes a third end portion extending between the first and second end portions, and that the at least one tuning hole is formed in the third end portion. It is submitted that Bittinger lacks a third end portion and lacks a tuning hole formed in such a third end portion as now claimed.

In view of the above, it is submitted that claims 1 and 2 are patentably distinguishable from the cited reference and that the rejection under § 102 should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 3 and 4 were again rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bittinger in view of Rose. Since claims 3 and 4 depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 1, these dependent claims are allowable at least for the same reasons as claim 1. Allowance of these claims is therefore respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present form of the claims are patentably distinguishable over the art of

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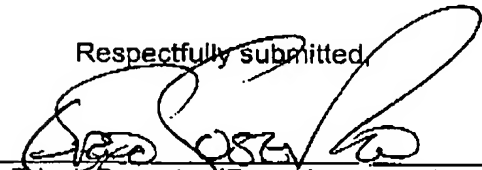
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record and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is requested.

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Attachments: None
EJS/ejs

Respectfully submitted,


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